

The Middle East and North Africa 2023

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This edition of **THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA**, the 69th in print, provides comprehensive coverage of political and economic life at the regional, subregional and national levels. The volume is divided into three separate, though complementary, sections. In Part One a collection of introductory essays discusses some of the most pertinent issues affecting the region. Topics covered include Saudi-Iranian relations, US regional policy, the issue of Kurdish political autonomy and identity, the transition to sustainable energy in the Gulf states, and the religions of the region. In Part Two specialist authors, researchers and commentators examine in detail the main political and economic events in each of the countries and territories in the region. In addition, all statistical and directory material has been thoroughly updated. Extensive coverage of international organizations and research bodies active in the Middle East and North Africa is included in a section of Regional Information, together with a comprehensive archive of documents related to the history of Israel and the Palestinian territories, and bibliographies of essential publications for further study. A calendar of the key political events of 2021–22 enables rapid reference to the year's main developments.

The year under review was a time of impasse for some countries and a time of significant change for others. In Libya, continuing disagreement between the Tobruk-based House of Representatives (HoR) and the Tripoli-based Government of National Unity of Abdul Hamid Mohammed Dbeibah led to the indefinite postponement of the scheduled presidential and parliamentary elections and the formation in March 2022 by the HoR of a rival administration headed by Fathi Bashagha. The situation became increasing volatile in the following months, with violent clashes between rival militias in Tripoli.

Legislative elections in Iraq and Lebanon were followed by stalemate in both countries as attempts to form new governments proved unsuccessful. In October 2021 the Sadr Movement of Muqtada al-Sadr secured the largest representation in the Iraqi Council of Representatives. However, amid bitter wrangling between rival Shi'a blocs, several attempts by the legislature to elect a new President in early 2022 failed owing to a lack of quorum as political groups boycotted the sessions. In a seeming effort to break the deadlock, the Sadr Movement legislators resigned en masse in June. Al-Sadr's announcement in August of his retirement from politics prompted his supporters to storm the presidential palace. Lebanon's continuing economic woes, with the Government announcing in April that the country was bankrupt, were compounded by the newly elected legislators' failure to agree on a government of national unity following the elections to the National Assembly in May (at which Hezbollah and its allies lost their majority).

President Kaïs Saïed of Tunisia further consolidated his authority by ordering the dissolution of the Conseil Supérieur de la Magistrature in February 2022 and replacing it with a provisional body appointed by himself. In March the President issued a decree dissolving the Assembly of the Representatives of the People, which had been suspended since July 2021, and in July 2022 he released a controversial new draft Constitution that gave him near-absolute power. The new charter came into effect later that month, having been overwhelmingly endorsed in a national referendum. Conversely, in Qatar there was a devolution of power (albeit limited) in October 2021 when, in accordance with the 2003 Constitution, the first elections to the Advisory Council were held to elect 30 members of the 45-seat legislative body (the other 15 members being appointed by the Amir). The new Council had the power to legislate, review the state budget, monitor government policy and hold ministers accountable for their actions.

Hopes for an end to the conflict in Yemen were boosted by the achievement of a United Nations (UN)-brokered ceasefire in April 2022. In the same month, in a bid to support the ongoing peace negotiations, President Abd al-Rabbuh Mansour Hadi delegated his own powers and those of his former deputy to a newly established Presidential Leadership Council. As widely forecast, the coalition Government in Israel proved fragile and in June Prime Minister Naftali Bennett announced that elections to the Knesset would be held on 1 November (the fifth set of legislative elections since April 2019).

Other notable events in the region included the death in May 2022 of the President of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, who was succeeded in both posts by his brother Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. On 1 June the UN agreed to a formal request by the Turkish Government to change the official registered name of the country from the Republic of Turkey to the Republic of Türkiye with immediate effect.

The entire content of the print edition of **THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA** is available online at www.europaworld.com. This prestigious resource incorporates sophisticated search and browse functions as well as specially commissioned visual and statistical content. An ongoing programme of updates of key areas of information ensures currency of content, and enhances the richness of the coverage.

The Editors would like to express their thanks to all the contributors for their articles and advice, as well as to the numerous governments and organizations that provided statistical and other information.

September 2022

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We acknowledge particular indebtedness for permission to reproduce material from the following publications: the United Nations' statistical databases and *Demographic Yearbook*, *Statistical Yearbook* and *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics*; the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's Institute for Statistics database; the *Human Development Report* of the United Nations Development Programme; the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations' statistical database; the statistical databases of the World Health Organization; the statistical databases of the UNCTAD/WTO International Trade Centre; the International Labour Office's statistical database; the World Bank's statistical databases, especially the World Development Indicators database, and the *World Development Report*; the International Monetary Fund's statistical database, *International Financial Statistics* and *Government Finance Statistics Yearbook*; the World Tourism Organization's *Tourism Highlights* and *Yearbook of Tourism Statistics*, 2022 edition, UNWTO, Madrid; the US Geological Survey; the International Telecommunication Union; the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia's *National Accounts Studies of the ESCWA Region*; Lloyd's List; and *The Military Balance* 2022, a publication of the International Institute for Strategic Studies, Arundel House, 6 Temple Pl., London, WC2R 2PG, UK. We are also grateful to the Israeli embassy, London, for the use of two maps illustrating the disengagement agreements between Israel and Egypt, and Israel and Syria (both 1974).

HEALTH AND WELFARE STATISTICS: SOURCES AND DEFINITIONS

Total fertility rate Source: WHO Global Health Observatory. The number of children that would be born per woman, assuming no female mortality at child-bearing ages and the age-specific fertility rates of a specified country and reference period.

Under-5 mortality rate Source: WHO Global Health Observatory. Defined by WHO as the probability of a child born in a specific year or period dying before reaching the age of five, if subject to the age-specific mortality rates of the year or period.

HIV/AIDS Source: UNAIDS. Estimated percentage of adults aged 15 to 49 years living with HIV/AIDS. < indicates 'fewer than'.

COVID-19 Sources: Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) at Johns Hopkins University (JHU) via Our World In Data; Hannah Ritchie, Edouard Mathieu, Lucas Rodés-Guirao, Cameron Appel, Charlie Giattino, Esteban Ortiz-Ospina, Joe Hasell, Bobbie Macdonald, Diana Beltekian and Max Roser (2020)—'Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19)'. Published online at OurWorldInData.org. (Retrieved from <https://ourworldindata.org/coronavirus>); Our World in Data: Mathieu, E., Ritchie, H., Ortiz-Ospina, E. et al. 'A global database of COVID-19 vaccinations' (Nature Human Behaviour, 2021). For reasons of comparability, UN population estimates have been used for most calculations.

Cumulative confirmed deaths (per 100,000 persons) Attribution of cause of death to COVID-19 is based on classifications from the World Health Organization's International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD) guidelines, supported by national advice to health practitioners. Data refer to confirmed deaths only, actual numbers are likely to be greater.

Fully vaccinated population (% of total population) 'Fully vaccinated' denotes receipt of all doses prescribed by specific vaccination regimes, this may vary depending on the vaccine. Alternative definitions of fully vaccinated, including receipt of only part of a dosing regime, or recovery from illness, have been disregarded. For the sake of best comparison, rates are based on the total rather than eligible population in each case.

Health expenditure Source: WHO Global Health Expenditure database. Covering the provision of health services (preventive and curative), family planning activities, and nutrition activities. Public sources include domestic revenue as internal transfers and grants, transfers, subsidies to voluntary health insurance beneficiaries, non-profit institutions serving households (NPISH) or enterprise financing schemes as well as compulsory prepayment and social health insurance contributions. External grants or loans for healthcare provided by international agencies and other national authorities are not included.

US \$ per head (PPP) International dollar estimates. Current domestic general government expenditures as a ratio of total population.

% of GDP The share of domestic general government resources used to fund health expenditures, given as a percentage of the economy as measured by gross domestic product (GDP).

Public expenditure % of total expenditure Share of current health expenditures funded from general government sources, social health insurance and compulsory prepayment.

Access to water and sanitation Source: WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme on Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (JMP) (*Progress on Household Drinking Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, 2000–2020*). Defined in terms of the percentage of the population using improved facilities in terms of the type of technology and levels of service afforded. For water, this includes house connections, public standpipes, boreholes with handpumps, protected dug wells, protected spring and rainwater collection; allowance is also made for other locally defined technologies. Sanitation is defined to include connection to a sewer or septic tank system, pour-flush latrine, simple pit or ventilated improved pit latrine, again with allowance for acceptable local technologies. Access to water and sanitation does not imply that the level of service or quality of water is 'adequate' or 'safe'.

Carbon dioxide emissions Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators database, citing CAIT data. Climate Watch. 2020. GHG Emissions. Washington, DC: World Resources Institute. Available at: <https://climatewatchdata.org/ghg-emissions>. Emissions comprise those resulting from the burning of fossil fuels (including those produced during consumption of solid, liquid and gas fuels and from gas flaring) and from the manufacture of cement, but exclude emissions resulting from land-use transformation and forestry.

Human Development Index (HDI) Source: UNDP, *Human Development Report* (2020). A summary of human development measured by three basic dimensions: prospects for a long and healthy life, measured by life expectancy at birth; knowledge, measured by adult literacy rate (two-thirds' weight) and the combined gross enrolment ratio in primary, secondary and tertiary education (one-third weight); and standard of living, measured by GDP per head (PPP US \$). The index value obtained lies between zero and one. A value above 0.800 indicates very high human development, between 0.700 and 0.799 high human development, between 0.550 and 0.699 medium human development, and below 0.550 low human development. A centralized data source for all three dimensions was not available for all countries. In some cases other data sources were used to calculate a substitute value; however, this was excluded from the ranking. Other countries, including non-UNDP members, were excluded from the HDI altogether. In total, 189 countries were ranked for 2019.

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